COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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" Without freedom, as, to their grief the Batavians can tell you, Military Defence is only the evidence of " complete subjugation: and the more triumphant the success of the defenders, the more hopeless the " condition of the defended. But, would we understand how freedom and defence are to go hand in hand, " and how civil liberty is even to gain strength with the increase of military power, then that constitution, " which is the table of our duties, the record of our rights, and the depository of our liberties, must be " the object of our study, and the guide of our steps." ——M[illegible]n CARTWRIGHT.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

MILITARY AFFAIRS.——In pages 385 and 455, and the following ones, will be found what I have, in this volume, already submitted to the public from my own pen, relative to military affairs, and particularly, as to what ought now to be done in order to obtain an efficient and permanent army. From my correspondents I have had the honour of communicating to the public many very ingenious and valuable papers. See, for instance, pages 412, 416, 462, and in the whole of the preceding sheet, from page 497 to the end of page 512. In the present sheet also the reader will find a letter upon the same subject, from a correspondent, who had attention paid to him in page 412. As the far greater part of these communications contain remarks upon what I have advanced as my opinion, I should here endeavour to answer such parts of them as appear to stand in need of an answer; but, for the present week, this must be postponed; because the plan promulgated in the speech of Mr. Windham certainly commands the precedence.——This speech, which was made in the House of Commons, on Thursday, the 3d instant, has put us in possession of the intentions of the ministry with regard to the new-modelling of the army; and, though every report of a speech must be imperfect, we may, with sufficient accuracy, now state what those intentions are, taking the subject under the four heads, in which it naturally divides itself.

I. THE REGULAR ARMY is to have no addition in the pay of the soldiers. The pay of the officers is left for future consideration; but, it is intimated that a better provision, than that which at present exists, will be made for officers' widows. The soldiers who shall hereafter enter the service are to be enlisted for 7 years, at the end of which period they are to be entitled to their discharge and are to acquire the right of following any trade in any place where they may choose to settle. If, at the end of 7 years, the soldier chooses to enter upon another term of 7 years, he is, during this second term, to receive 6d. a week additional pay; and, if he chooses to take his discharge at the end of it, he is to have a small pension for life, in addition to the right acquired by the first seven years service. If, at the end of the second period, he chooses to enter for a third period of seven years, he is, during this third period, or term, to receive 1s. a week additional pay; he is, besides, to acquire the right before-mentioned, and is to have a pension of a shilling a day for life.——As to the soldiers who are already in the regular army, they are to acquire no right whatever of demanding their discharge; but, the King and Parliament, or, in better phrase, the Country, in its bounty, will make them immediately feel the advantages of the new system; for, all those who have now served seven years and less than fourteen years are to be put immediately upon the list of the 6d. a week additional pay; and all those who have served fourteen years and upwards are to be put upon the list of 1s. a week additional pay. Besides this, which is certainly a pure bounty, on the part of the country, the soldiers already enlisted will see, in the new system, a better prospect for the future. The Chelsea allowances are to be augmented. Some pensioners are to have 6d. others 9d. and others 1s. a day; and, this augmentation is to commence immediately, and is to operate in favour of those who are already pensioners.

II THE MILITIA is to be suffered to sink somewhat nearer to its original number of 40,000 men; and (for which let all the nation be grateful!) the detestable ballot is to cease; it is to be annihilated by law; it is not to be revived; it is no longer to hang over the heads of the

fathers and the sons. When vacancies occur, they are, in future to be filled up by recruiting at a limited bounty.

III. THE VOLUNTEERS are (thank God!) no longer to drain us through the means of the tax-gatherer; they are no longer to harrass the people by dunning subscriptions; and, they are no longer to insult the army by assuming the command of its officers.——Clothing for this year only they are to have; but for no longer. They are to have no more pay or allowances. All their swarm of toad-eating inspectors are to be put upon real military duty, or are to cease to receive pay and allowances. The government will furnish with arms such of them as choose to remain embodied and to attend to orders issued; and, if they so remain, they are to be exempted from the duty of training (to be hereafter spoken of); but, all the expenses attendant upon their assembling as Volunteers are to be defrayed by themselves.——As to *rank*, no one is hereafter to receive rank in the Volunteers higher than that of Captain; and, with regard to the relative rank of those who already have commissions, no volunteer officer, whatever his rank may be, is to take command of any officer in the regulars, unless such regular officer be below the rank of Captain; and, moreover, no regular officer, however low his rank may be, who happens to have the command of a whole corps, is, during such command, to be liable to be commanded by any officer of Volunteers.

IV. ARMED INHABITANTS.——Some better name should be found out for this class of the military force. Mr. Windham did not seem to know very well by what words to designate it. I have great objection to "armed-peasantry." The last is a word which the people of England do not understand; and, the name is certainly not the better for having been so long applied by us to the armed population of those countries, which, one after another, have fallen under the arms of that enemy, against whose attacks, it is our object to be prepared. "Levy-en-masse" is still worse. I wish some short phrase, truly expressive of the thing were found out and adopted. Much depends on *words*. Much, in this case, will depend upon the mere name. But, at all events, it should be *English*, and in the English taste; that is to say, it should require as little breath as possible in the pronunciation of it.——This force is to consist of persons not enlisted into either army or militia; not clothed at the public expense; not required to wear any thing by way of uniform; not expected to be embodied in battalions; but merely to be assembled in order to learn to shoot, or to use a pike; and, intended to aid the army in case of actual invasion. This training is, however, to be compulsory; and, in order to ascertain who are to be first trained, a ballot is to be resorted to. Mr. Windham proposes, first to divide the people into four classes, according to age, from 16 to 40 years, taking none younger than the former and none older than the latter. Next, the King in council is to judge as to the number to be called out for training; and, it is supposed, that 200,000 will, at first, be sufficient. The rolls being ready, the particular persons will soon be fixed upon. The time for which they are to be called out is to be 26 half days in the year; and each man is to be allowed a shilling for each half day. When a man has undergone one year's training, he is not again to be called upon. The persons who are to attend the drills, and, indeed, to teach the men what they are to be taught, are to be detached for that purpose from the Militia regiments, and from the second battalions of the regulars.

In remarking upon this plan, in which we may and must observe generally, that there is much good, we will take the heads in the inverted order, beginning, of course, with the *Armed Inhabitants*, or, which perhaps would be a better and a very good name, and none the worse for being a simple one, the *Trained-Men*; to begin with these, the plan, as far as it goes, is certainly an excellent one. The ballot, as thus applied, has in it nothing frightful or odious, except its mere sound; but, so hateful, so truly detestable, and worthy of detestation, is this sound become, that it were anxiously to be wished, that *roll*, and its derivatives, could be employed in its stead. The *pay*, however, is, in my opinion, by no means necessary. There are 52 Sundays in a year; and, it is hard indeed, if the one quarter part of these days cannot be bestowed upon the learning of that which is necessary to the defence of the country. The pay will tend to degrade the duty; which is, besides, so very light, that it does in fact, call for no pay whatever, especially when it comes in

the place, and will appear to have produced the abolition of, that accursed thing called the ballot. With respect to the persons who are to have the *command* at these trainings, there requires much consideration; for, however light the duty, there must be command; real command; a power of *compelling* an implicit obedience to orders. Mr. Windham will find this to be, by far, the most difficult point; and he will do well to make the act annual; for, it is next to impossible that difficulties requiring revision should not almost immediately arise. Let him well consider what is the sort of manners, as to command, that serjeants and officers of the Militia and of the army will carry with them to the places of training; and, let him consider, what is the sort of minds and of manners that they will there meet with. Let him reflect on the degree of patience, and, indeed, of wisdom, that will be requisite in these officers and serjeants, who, though they may, agreeably to his description, now be "gaping like oysters at low ebb," ought, when they come to the places of training, to possess something more than the capacity of swallowing. The division of the people into classes, according to their *age*, is very judicious; not the more so because it was so strongly recommended by me, at the time when the first General Defence Act was in agitation (see vol. 4 p. 120); but, certainly not the less so on that account. It may not be amiss to carry the age to 40 years; though, I should think, that between 16 and 30 would be quite sufficient; or, at most, an extension to 35. That it is *every* man's duty to aid in the defence of his country there can be no doubt; but, it appears to me, that, by embracing so very large a part of the people by the clauses of an act of parliament, you run the risk of experiencing the truth of the maxim, that "what is *every* body's business is *nobody's* business." The rolls should, I, therefore, think, be somewhat more select. A man of 40 wants to have *rest* of a Sunday; and, to render these Trained Men as efficient as possible, you should, in every way that you can, render their duty pleasant; or, at least, not painful. And now, as to *arms*, I know not whether Mr. Windham proposes to have them deposited in some particular place in each parish, or to leave them in the custody of the men: for myself, however, I am satisfied, that they not only ought to be left with the men, during their year of training, but that it would be wise, at the end of the year's training, to make the arms the property of the man who had been trained; and this, to say nothing of the utility of the arms in his hands, upon occasions of emergency, would be full as cheap as paying him for his time at drill. Indeed, as it is the duty of every man to bear arms for the defence of his country, it is evidently his duty, if he be able, to keep arms in his house; and if a larger proportion of the people, than that above described, were to be called out, it should be under the direction and inspection of the magistrates, merely to see that they had arms. Let no one talk of the *danger* of trusting the people with arms; for, how is it possible to reconcile such a sentiment with the principle, whereon alone can be maintained the justice of compelling all men to bear arms for the defence of their country? But, the fact is, that, if there be *now* any such danger, all the schemes for defending the country must be perfectly useless. The danger from abroad is now of a magnitude that quite eclipses every danger from within. Time was, when the regular army and militia were competent to meet all the probable dangers from without: this is no longer the case. The defence of the King and of the kingdom must now be left to the people, to the mass of the people. To do any thing that would infer a suspicion of their fidelity, of their wish to defend their Sovereign and their country, would be the height of folly, and particularly at a moment, when, in every act, you proclaim, that to them you appeal as the only remaining means of defence. The confidence should be entire, or there should be none at all; for, of a people defending themselves against their will, the idea is perfectly absurd. I am aware, that a good deal will still be said about the danger of placing arms in the hands of the people; and, the objection would be sound, if applied to bodies distinguished from the rest of the community, for, we have recently seen what violences, what acts of insolence and oppression, what daring defiance of the law such bodies, uncontrouled by any military code or discipline, are capable of; but, let *all* the people be armed; let none be assembled in bodies distinct from the community; let all that conveniently can, learn expertly to use arms; let there be no *military rank* amongst them; and, then you need fear nothing from them, unless they are disaffected to the state, and, in that case, to arm any portion of them, or, which is, in this respect, the same thing, to deposit arms within their reach, must, even upon your own view of the matter, be worse than useless. But, why have I taken up the reader's time with these remarks? The set of observations, above referred to, and which will be found

between pages 120 and 127 of Volume IV. of the Register, are in the hands of most of my readers. Whether Mr. Windham had ever read those observations is a question that I cannot positively determine; but, if he had not, I must be highly flattered at perceiving the exact coincidence, as to outline at least, between his plan for training the people and my plan for effecting that purpose. My project was pretty elaborate; it was described under four heads; and, I am of opinion, that the reader will find it more perfect than that of Mr. Windham, unless, indeed, which it is fair to suppose, much of what he intends in detail has been omitted in the report of his speech. Upon one point, however, we *differ*: I mean that of *allowances for time spent at drill*. I objected to any such allowance; and, when the reader has re-perused the observations, I think he will be of my opinion. I stated, as will be seen in Vol. IV. page 124, the necessity of a *drilling officer* and a *drummer* for each place of assembling men for the purpose of training; and, I recommended, that the officer should be appointed by the King; but, I should not, if I had proceeded further, have recommended the taking of this officer from the *Militia*, nor, that I know of, from the second battalions of the regulars; assuredly not from the militia! The reader will find, in a subsequent page, a letter upon this and other topics connected with Mr. Windham's plan; and, I must confess, that I agree with the writer as to what he has said respecting the unfitness of the militia officers for the purpose here spoken of. The great secret, however, is, how, at these trainings, to *insure obedience to the commands of the officer*; for, without this, you may as well whistle as to pass the act of parliament. The *drum* and the *standard* will not, I hope, be forgotten. Their powers are much greater than men generally imagine. My fear is, that this measure will, at last, be but a half-measure, especially when I see a skulking place, as my correspondent justly calls it, in the Volunteer Corps. I cannot dismiss this part of the subject, without referring the reader to the work of MAJOR CARTWRIGHT, who has written most ably upon the subject of arming the people, and whose book it is impossible to read without therefrom deriving profit. The MAJOR will, too, do me the justice to grant, that, in proposing a plan for forming a regular army, I always had in view this more numerous description of defensive force. I have never, for one moment, entertained an opinion that this nation could preserve its [illegible] without trusting *the people* with arms.——The proposed measures relative to the *Volunteers* must meet with the approbation of every sensible man in the kingdom. If there is any thing to regret, as to this part of the plan, it is that it does not go far enough. To take away the allowances, in kind as well as in money, is perfectly just and politic; the arms might have been given to the Volunteers at once, if a law for a general arming had been adopted; but the *rank!* Oh, I would never have left any thing resembling rank amongst them! "What! annul the Commissions!" And, *why not?* Why not annul them? Every argument in support of lowering the rank (for such in effect is the proposal) is an argument for taking it away altogether. What, in all the world, can be found out as a justification for suffering any part of this rank to remain? That the taking of it away would offend those empty-headed coxcombs, who, having no other means of obtaining distinction from their brother shop-keepers, are enchanted with the titles conferred on them as volunteer officers, one can easily conceive; but, that it should offend any man worth conciliating is utterly incredible. Mr. Windham has considered, and truly considered, this profusion of military titles as highly injurious to the regular army; but, it is also highly injurious to every man entitled to distinction in society. Noblemen and gentlemen, by becoming officers of Volunteer Corps (and, as things were, it was very difficult to avoid it), placed themselves, at once, upon a footing with hair-dressers and pastry-cooks. This was the true *levelling* system. A gentleman frequently met, at a mess-table, the man, who, in the morning, had cut his hair, or sold his wife a wig; and, I dare say, that scores of Colonel BIRCH's regiment have made him cry "coming, Sir!" in six hours after having grounded their arms at his word of command. This worthy maker of pastry and of turtle-soup may now bend the whole of his genius towards those delicious objects; or, if he should still have a taste for colonelling, we shall have the satisfaction to know, that he cannot crow over officers of the real army. Lord Castlereagh said, that it would have been more manly to say, at once, that the Volunteers were of no use, and to have dissolved them by act of parliament. So it would; but, I should like to know, in what act of his whole life, Lord Castlereagh ever set an example of manly conduct; and, one might ask him, whether it was very manly to appeal, upon this occasion, to the passions of those poor empty creatures, who could feel their pride wounded at being stripped of

Volunteer rank? Nevertheless, dismissed the whole of them should have been, if I could have had my will. We have seen their bullying advertisements too long. We have too long endured their insolence, and their violations of the law. We have too long seen the scandalous partiality which has been shown towards them. I see no reason why any part of the system should remain. No reason whatever can I see why Colonel Birch any more than his neighbour, the shoe-black, should be exempted from the training law. I do not like to see the people divided into mere *rich* and *poor*, when the object is to defend the country. This is a very odious principle of distinction. We shall still have Volunteers. The poor will not, indeed, go into those corps, the chief motives being removed; but, the rich will, in order to avoid mixing with the poor in the meetings for training; *a motive which did not before exist!* The former will now meet, and dress themselves out; they will congregate, and toast, and guttle more than ever. Why these *two sorts* of armed inhabitants? Two distinct sorts? One of them under the command of an officer appointed by the King, and the other not under the command of an officer appointed by the King; or, at least, an officer who is not one of themselves? I should not object to a distinction upon a different principle; but, the distinction here made is the very worst that can exist. It is that of mere money; and this money is to screen the possessor from being trained by the same sort of authority that a man without money must submit to. If, as MAJOR CARTWRIGHT proposes, the rich were obliged to perform a degree of service proportioned to the amount of their property, there would be some reason and justice in the distinction; but, here, the contrary is the case; the rich, for no other reason than because they are rich, having the privilege to withdraw themselves from the training under officers appointed by the king. If this distinction, upon the principle which I understand it to be founded in, be acted upon, be assured, that the whole of the plan, as far as relates to the arming and training of the people, will fail; another year will waste away in vain expectations, and, perhaps, before the government be convinced of their error, the season to profit from such conviction will have passed.——As to the *Militia*, the ballot is put an end to for ever, I hope; and, I am only sorry, that any means whatever are to be adopted to keep alive that establishment. A regular army and an armed people are all the species of force that we ought to have; and, as to the fear of disgusting militia officers, what would the minister have to do but to open the regular army to them? It is downright nonsense to talk of a man's having a taste for the army, and, at the same time, to say, that he dislikes the service of the line. Such a man may have a taste for a red coat and a sash and a cockade; but, is it not to trifle too much to say, that he has a taste for a *military life*? ——With respect to Mr. Windham's plan for altering the condition of the *Regular Army*, first, I think the terms too long. Five years would have been enough for each term; for, I never can think that a man above 40 years of age (which is the average that fifteen years' service would have brought the soldiers to) is so fit for a soldier as a man under that age. The 6d. a week in prospect, and the 1s. a week after the second term, will, I am afraid, do but little good, especially in the way of inducement to enter the army *now*, and that ought to have been a main consideration. The beginning *immediately* to pay this 6d. or 1s. to men already in the service will, indeed, have some effect; and, more and better effect will be produced by the intended *immediate* augmentation of the pensions to the present pensioners, and how strenuously I have, at different times, besought the ministers to make such an augmentation, my readers will not fail to recollect. But, there should be an augmentation, and a large augmentation, of the *number* of pensioners. The parishes are loaded with poor wretches, the streets are lined with unfortunate creatures, the marrow of whose bones has been wasted in the king's service. Mark the difference between their lot and that of superannuated disabled tax-gatherers! For a runner of the post-office, who can no longer follow his occupation, a pension of 50*l.* a year, the newspapers tell us, is now to be provided. The highest of Mr. Windham's Chelsea pensions is not to exceed 18*l.* 5*s.* The pains and vexations, too, attendant upon the receiving of a pension ought to be removed. The poor fellows, who are now upon the out-pension lists, both of army and navy, are compelled to beg their way to and from Chelsea and Greenwich. We build docks; immense docks and warehouses, and our ministers go in state to lay the corner stones. We build taxing-shops large as palaces; but, since the days of the Stuarts; since that "glorious edifice," the funding system was begun, what have we done for the army or the navy? what have we done to render permanent the glory or the independence of England? The hospital

at Chelsea was built, when the standing army did not exceed *ten thousand men*; the amount of the out-pension was, nominally, what it now is, when *a penny* was worth as much as *fourpence* is worth now; and, let it be observed, that, while the Civil List has been repeatedly augmented in nominal amount, upon the ground of the depreciation in the value of money; while the salaries of the Judges and other officers appertaining to the executive and judiciary branches have been augmented upon the same grounds; while even the pay of the soldiers *in service* has been, for the same reason, augmented, the allowances of Chelsea (except in a trifling instance, and that very lately) has experienced no augmentation at all. Of the pay of the officers of the army I shall not, at present, speak; because that *must* become a separate measure; but, generally, I would beg leave to remind Mr. Windham, that money is daily depreciating, and that, if the system, to which his noble friend," whose star has just beamed above the horison," be persevered in; if it were possible to persevere in it, until the end of the first term of 7 years, the promised 6d. a week, which is to operate as a stimulus to enlistment, will not purchase one single quid of tobacco a week. But, to speak my mind, I have no confidence in the effect of these *refreshing fees*. Seven years is a long while for a soldier to look forward to for an additional pay of a penny a day; and, especially when he considers, that, to the enjoyment of that penny a day is attached the condition of another 7 years service. As the means of bettering the condition of the men already in the service, these allowances of 6d. and a 1s. to begin immediately, are very well imagined; but, as distant objects, as future enjoyments, as motives to enlistment, they are, assuredly, much too weak to produce the desired effect; and they are, besides, and which is, indeed, their important deficiency, quite inadequate to the purpose of producing a sensible and lasting impression on the minds of the people, favourable to the military service; and, they tend not, even in the smallest degree, to produce a common feeling of interest between the army and the rest of the subjects of his Majesty; yet, without the existence of this feeling, founded in permanent causes, who will say, that, while despotism is extending its grasp over every corner of Europe, an army of 250,000 men is a thing to be desired in England? The proposed measures will add to the pay and the pensions of the soldiers; to the pay of the officers something will also be added; something will be added to the pensions of the widows of the officers; the training of the people will be committed to officers appointed by the king; the raising of the militia will now be from funds out of the Exchequer. All this, in a military point of view, is so much of good; but, does not Mr. Windham, who is most sincerely attached to the liberties of the people, see, in all this, a great and even a fearful addition to the power of the crown, without any thing at all to balance against it? The more you augment the emoluments, the more you exalt the character, of the army, the more you swell the power of the crown; unless you take care, that your means of effecting this augmentation and this exaltation shall, at the same time, entwine the interests and feelings of the army with those of the rest of the people; unless you take care, that, by the very means that you add to your military power, you strengthen the ramparts of public liberty. This double object was, I think, provided for, and effectually provided for, in the outline of the plan proposed by me, it being contrary to nature to suppose, that an army constituted according to that plan, should ever co-operate in destroying, or in diminishing, the liberties of the people; and, yet, there was, at the same time, quite a sufficient stock of motives provided for insuring due obedience to the commands of the monarch. The doctrine of having one sort of army as *a check* upon another sort of army was intolerably absurd; but, better those checks than to leave an army of 250,000 men, the only embodied force in the country, totally cut off from all interests in common with the people. The army, navy, and ordnance now cost 40 millions a year. Recollect, that all the officers in all these services are appointed by the sole will of the crown; that they all depend upon the crown for promotion; that they hold their commissions merely at the pleasure of the crown; that they can, at any moment, and even without reason assigned, be dismissed, disgraced, and ruined. Should there not, then, be some tie to bind both officers and soldiers to the liberties of the country? And, is not the necessity for such a tie increased in the exact proportion that you augment the emoluments and exalt the character of the army? And, is not the creating of such ties peculiarly proper at a time when you are, by all possible means, giving to the whole of your force that shape which naturally brings it immediately under the sole power of the crown? The too great propensity of men to overlook one danger through their anxiety

to ward off another is illustrated by the moralist in the fable of the one-eyed Doe, who, that she might be secure against the hunter, constantly gazed close to the bank of the sea, keeping her watchful eye toward the land, which, the hunter perceiving, stole along in a boat, and shot her dead, at the moment when she thought herself in perfect security; and, thus has it frequently, not to say always, happened with nations, who, in the hour of imminent danger from without, have neglected the means of providing against danger from within. We have seen it proposed in print, that the parliament should "*lay its hand* upon the people." That is to say, that it should pass a law for compelling men to become soldiers; and, of course, for punishing them with death, perhaps, for disobedience. In what a state must we be, when such a proposition can be seriously made, and that, too, in a printed address to a minister of state? Such a measure, if necessary for the defence of the country against an invading enemy would still be useless; for, what are we afraid of but loss of liberty? What do we wish to be defended against but despotism? And, how foolish would it be to submit to despotism from one quarter, in order to be able to resist it from another quarter? I will not be supposed to insinuate any suspicions as to the views or the dispositions of any particular persons: I make no such insinuations: but, I am to consider what is possible at any future time; and I am, as far as I am able, to provide against it, if I regard it as injurious to my country. I view the crown as having become, merely by circumstances over which it has had no controul, powerful beyond all former example in this country. When I say the crown, I do not mean the King; but, the ministry of the day, and, indeed, the whole of the executive branch of the government. It is impossible, when we reflect on the great proportion of every man's income, which now passes annually through the hands of the government; on the endless numbers of persons which the government employs to collect taxes and to meddle in one way or another in the concerns of individuals; on the many and powerful holds which it has upon the property, real as well as personal, of every man in the kingdom; on the innumerable channels of influence that it has continually open, and on the irresistible means which it necessarily possesses of subduing the unbending to its will: it is quite impossible to reflect on all this without feeling alarm at a proposition the tendency of which must be greatly to increase the power which the crown already has over the people. Not one jot of the constitutional power of the crown would I wish to see taken away. I wish to see the King of England always a real King. No one of his just prerogatives would I see diminished. But, I wish England to be what England has been: I wish to enjoy my share of those liberties which were handed down to us by our forefathers; and thus wishing, I cannot, in silence, see this contemplated addition, this fearful addition, made to the power of the crown, *unaccompanied with any thing whereby to secure a balance on the side of public liberty.* At the same time, however, that I thus declare my hostility to the plan of Mr. Windham, as tending to subvert the constitution, it is my duty to declare, that I am fully persuaded, he does not regard it as having any such tendency; and, indeed, I am equally persuaded, that there is not one of his colleagues of the cabinet who does not view it, in this respect at least, as perfectly harmless. The reader will, perhaps, think with them; if so I shall have taken up his time to no purpose; but, if he think with me, I trust he will, in whatever sphere he may move, have the courage to avow his sentiments, and to use his utmost endeavours to give those sentiments effect.——I cannot close this article without noticing a paragraph in the Morning Chronicle of the 9th instant, in which the writer, commenting upon another paragraph, which appeared in the Courier of the 5th, relative to the discontents that would probably arise in the present army and in the fleet in consequence of the advantageous terms granted to the new levies; in commenting upon this paragraph, the Morning Chronicle observes: "Thus, not satisfied with planting the "seeds of disaffection and jealousy amongst "the soldiery, they intend also to inflame "and render discontented the sailors. Such "conduct as this needs no observation: *Ja-* "*cobinism*, it must be recollected however, "is not a jot less dangerous because it is "concealed under the cloak of loyalty!" And this from the *Morning Chronicle*, observe! What could John Bowles and the Middlesex saints have said more? Really this is too barefaced! The editor of the Morning Chronicle, who has so often complained, and in such bitter terms, of the dastardly attempts to silence his arguments by a cry of Jacobinism! And do you, in good earnest, think, sir, to conjure up and to frighten us with this obsolete political hob-gobling? If you do; if you mean thus to render your office of Treasury-defender a sinecure, you will find yourself completely

deceived. As to the remarks in the Courier, they were foolish enough. The argument was worth nothing. There is no reason to suppose, that the new plan will excite discontent either in the army or the fleet. But, though there was abundant ground, whereon to accuse the writer of folly, there was none at all whereon to accuse him of felony; and, when we recollect your indignation, your just indignation, so often and so strongly expressed at the preferring of similar accusations against yourself, and that, too, by this very Courier, it is impossible to account for your conduct without considering this charge of Jacobinism as something which descends along with the offices at Whitehall, and which, at each successive change, is handed over by the clerks of those offices, to the editors of their newspapers, to be used, as occasion may serve, for the benefit of their principals. Be the cause what it may, however, you may be assured, that the effect will not answer your purpose. The cockney public will endure much; but, from nobody, will they now endure an out-cry about Jacobinism: coming from your opponents it has, for years past, excited nothing but laughter; but coming from you, and at this day, it will not fail to excite contempt. I am willing to hope, that some officious clerk, some senseless sycophant, has imposed this paragraph upon you. I do hope this, because I have a sincere respect for your talents and your character (I am speaking to Mr. SPANKEY); but, I must still blame the act, whatever the cause, by which an attempt is made to silence an adversary by means so foul, so every way unworthy of any man who has ever moved his pen, as you so often and so successfully have, in the cause of truth and of the freedom of discussion.

BED OF ROSES.——This phrase, used by Lord Castlereagh (in the debate upon Mr. Windham's plan), as descriptive of the state of the nation's affairs when the new ministry came into office, has, it would seem, given great offence to those ministers and their partisans; but, why it has, I really cannot, for my part, clearly perceive. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did, before he came into office, talk of an *inquiry* into the conduct of his predecessors as to the third coalition; but we now hear no more of it. An *inquiry* into the conduct of Lord Wellesley was urged by Mr. Windham; that now appears to be thought unnecessary. The finances are in an excellent state. The Sinking Fund is all that the Pitts said it was. The nation, we were expressly told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is in a "high state of *prosperity*." Why, then, find fault with the Bed of Roses? It was a bold attempt to be sure; or, rather, it would have been, if made with respect to one who thinks as I do about the matter; but, nothing is there in it of which any of the *ministers* can reasonably complain. Nay, Mr. Fox, though he was warmed, though he was chafed by it, did not venture, in his description of the thorns and the brambles, to impute *blame* to any body. That he could not do, without censuring Mr. Pitt; and how, so soon at least, could he censure Mr. Pitt, on account of whose "*merits*," he had so recently voted a large sum of the public money to pay his debts? In that vote, the Pitts, from causes which shall be hereafter described, obtained a quietus for all the past. Lord Castlereagh, doubtless, is well acquainted with these causes; and, much would he be to blame, if he did not make his conduct go hand in hand with that of Mr. Pitt. This, as towards the new ministry, is perfectly just. Having declared that Mr. Pitt was a minister of merit; having voted a sum of the public money on account of that merit; having gone this length, for whatever purpose, *they* have no right whatever to throw out accusations against his colleagues, whom they know well to have been merely his instruments, or, at most, only sharers in his misdeeds, I mean, his "*merits*," always adhering to the exact words of Mr. Fox. Let us, therefore, hear no more complaints about the Bed of Roses. Let those who are upon it make the best of it. The old women say to their daughters, "as you make your bed so you must lie in "it;" and the same may we say to the ministers. They took to the Pitt inheritance without any complaint; and the people have a right to demand of them a complete responsibility for all the mischief that shall happen.

THE LOAN. —— Upon the subject of finance, it was not my intention to trouble the reader with any further remarks, until I had an opportunity of entering into it, agreeably to my intention, in the preceding sheet, page 493; but, upon looking over the Morning Chronicle of the 29th ultimo, I find there some remarks upon the loan recently made, which remarks I cannot pass over in silence. After stating, in the jargon of 'Change Alley, the terms of the loan, the writer, in the true Treasury-strain, proceeds thus: "So that the permanent interest "which the public will have to pay for every "100l. borrowed, is *only* 4l. 19s. 7d. This "is a *most gratifying proof of the solid* "*wealth and power of the country*; and

" yet the contractors have every reason to " be *satisfied with their bargain.* The com- " petition was open and fair. The bidding " of Mr. Barnes and his friends was so " good as to give an *admirable display of* " *the resources of the Empire* for the *con-* " *tinuance of the war*, if the intemperance " of the enemy shall force us to the evil." ——This is not, reader, from that slavish vehicle, the SUN. It is from the Morning Chronicle! How completely it has fallen into the cant of office; that cant, which, only a few months ago, it reprobated in terms so severe! Speaking, further of on, the sums that will, in the course of the year, be brought into the money-market by the Commissioners for managing the Sinking Fund, the editor of the Morning Chronicle says: " This is the genuine source of the facility " with which our loans are raised; and " thus the Sinking Fund comes as surely " back again to the public aid, as if it were " directly applied to the service of the year. " We mention this as an *unanswerable* re- " ply to those theorists, who would violate " public faith, to get at *it* by summary " means." At *what*, wise sir? Get at *what?* At the Sinking Fund? Is that what you mean? If it be, what nonsense are you talking? What do you mean by *getting at it?* Do you think, then, that this Sinking Fund consists of deposits of money, either in a chest, or in real property, or in goods and chattles? If this be not your notion of it, why do you talk of *getting at it?* And, if it be your notion, you are, it must be confessed, most eminently qualified for criticising the theories of the persons whom you have thought proper to charge (without any attempt at proof) with a wish to " violate " public faith!" This *Sinking Fund* is a mere *name.* There is no fund at all. There is nothing in it which partakes, in the smallest degree, of the nature of those things, which have, in the concerns of men, been called *funds.* The plain and true description of the thing in question is this: several millions a year (this year 8 millions) are raised upon the people in taxes, which millions are paid into the hands of certain commissioners, who are appointed (and *paid* too) for the purpose of going once or twice a week, into the stock exchange, there, in the course of the year, to lay out these millions in stock. The next year more millions are raised in taxes for the same purpose, and so on. Well, then, who would not imagine, that the stock thus bought up was *destroyed*, especially when the Morning Chronicle describes the Commissioners as men appointed to " *extinguish* the national " debt." Who would not imagine, that the " extinguished " stock was *extinguished?* Not at all; it is merely transferred into another department; *interest is still paid upon it* by the people; interest *must continue to be paid upon it;* and all the purpose it answers, is, to *keep up the price of the stocks* by sending a large purchaser into the market regularly twice a week, or, as far as I know, oftener, for this purpose; as a prop to the funding system; as a means of draining the people, and, at the same time and by the very same power, keeping them silent: viewed in this light the Sinking Fund, as it is called, is a most excellent invention; but, as a means of *really extinguishing the national debt*, it has hitherto been, and always will be, perfectly useless. I like much to hear this converted gentleman of the Morning Chronicle talk about the " *solid wealth* and *power* of the coun- " try," as exhibited in the bargain for a loan! Another opportunity will offer for exposing this delusion in a manner more complete; but, in the mean while, let the reader bear in mind, that the advocates of this " *Fund*," who have, till now, always talked of its *future* powerful effects, now begin to rest their defence of it upon its *present* effects; and, the reason is, that they see, and they know that the most stupid of the people will very soon see, that, as to *paying off the debt*, it never can have any effect whatever.

AFFAIRS OF INDIA.——(Continued from pages 171, 197, 237, 303, 368, and 400). In the last of the pages here referred to, I stated, upon hearsay, but upon my own belief also (the minister's Budget not having then appeared), that *a million* sterling, for the present year, had already been advanced, out of the taxes of the nation, to the East India Company, in order to enable that Company to meet the demands, or, indeed, a small part of the demands of its creditors. The event has proved, that my information was but too correct; and, we have now the assurance of the mortifying, the galling fact, that, out of the seven millions of new taxes to be raised upon us this year, one million is for the use of a company of merchants, to whom we have granted a monopoly of trade, for the sake of whose trade we have expended millions of money and thousands upon thousands of lives, and who, at the moment when our ministers are granting away our money to *them*, owe *us*, according to their charter, millions of money! Is this what we had to expect from the new ministry? What claim, I would be glad to know, has this company of mer-

chants upon us, the burdened people of England? They talk of the expences of WARS; but, again, we ask, who authorised these wars? Who sanctioned them? *Who* is it that has been the cause of these demands upon our labour and our property, at a moment when we have left hardly any thing that we can call our own?——The very idea of *poverty* as applied to the East India Company, has something unnatural in it. This is a body of great merchants; the greatest in the kingdom; they are a sort of petty sovereigns; they have assumed the epithets appertaining to the high nobility; and, to see these men come creeping to the minister for aid; to hear them, as, *at last*, we do, proclaiming from their own palace, that they are brought to the "*brink* "*of beggary*:" the bare contemplation of this is sufficient to excite astonishment; what, then, must be our feelings, when, after having enjoyed the revenues and trade of an empire at our expense, we find them running to *us* for relief?——Judging from the conduct of Sir T. Metcalf (one of the directors) at the beginning of the session of parliament, I was long of opinion, that the directors had approved of all those wars, and all that immense expenditure of money, in India, by which their affairs had been brought into their present state: now, however, I find, that this has not been the case. I find, that the Wellesley wars and expenditures, or, at least, the far greater part of them, have been disapproved of by the East India Directors. The Directors appear, of late, to have been convinced, that the only way of justifying their own conduct, was to separate themselves from Lord Wellesley; and, to convince the parliament and the nation, that their distresses, and the failure of their engagements towards the public, had all arisen from measures, adopted without their consent, and disapproved of by them. With the very proper and very laudable view of producing this conviction, Mr. HUDDLESTONE, more than a fortnight previous to the Easter recess, gave notice of his intention (naming the day) to move for the laying before the House, a copy of a dispatch from the Court of Directors to the Governor General in Council at Bengal, dated on the 3d of April, 1805, approved of by the whole court, Sir T. Metcalf excepted, but *stopped by the Board of Controul*, who, according to the powers vested in them by Mr. Pitt's India Bill, are to examine, and to approve or disapprove, of every dispatch sent out by the Court of Directors to their Governor-General in Council. This dispatch is of vast importance as a ground for inquiry into the conduct of the Governor-General. It takes a review of the whole of his conduct, and it expresses the opinion of his employers upon that conduct. The circumstance of its *not being permitted to be sent out* weighs in favour of its production, rather than against it. As evidence against Lord Wellesley it certainly cannot be produced; nor is it as evidence against Lord Wellesley that it is called for; but, it is evidence of the *propriety of an inquiry* into the conduct of that person, and it is *inquiry*, and nothing but inquiry, that we at present demand from the ministers. Upon what ground any one will attempt to resist the production of this important paper, especially after the declaration of Lord Temple, that the friends of Lord Wellesley wished for every paper at all connected with his conduct to be produced; after this, it would be difficult to imagine any pretext that could be devised for resisting the production of the dispatch, of which we have been speaking; yet, it is very odd, that, day after day, for more than a week previous to the recess, something or other did occur to cause a request from the ministers to Mr. Huddlestone to put off his motion; and, on the day next before Good Friday, when the motion was, without fail, to have come on, Mr. Windham's plan was brought forward, it having been, unfortunately, prevented from being brought forward the day before, in consequence of the illness of Mr. Fox. That Mr. Huddlestone's motion will, however, now be made, there is no doubt at all entertained; and, when the paper is produced, it will, if I am not much misinformed, produce a greater impression upon the public mind than any thing has done for a long series of years. The East-India Directors have been cowed down. They have been made the tools, the mere tools, just as Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan said they would be, of the Board of Controul and its minions in India. The Directors have seen their concern and their constituents brought, to use the expression of Mr. Robert Thornton, to the "brink of beggary," and, all the while, they, as we shall now find, have been earnestly remonstrating against the measures which have produced this terrible effect, and have now thrown themselves upon the mercy of the minister of the day! It must be painful for these men to stand thus dependant upon the minister, and, accused, as they are, by the public, of adding to its burdens. It behoves them to clear themselves; and, indeed, the fault to be imputed to them, is, that they have so long held their tongues. But, when one

considers the state of thraldom, in which they have been held, one is less surprised at this. They have been mere creatures in the hands of the minister, and, such, had it not been for Mr. Paull, they would have continued. To that gentleman, and to others who have come voluntarily to his support; but, first, and principally, to him the Directors and the public are indebted for the fair prospect there now is of obtaining an inquiry into the causes of the distresses of the East India Company, and of the heavy burdens which those distresses have brought, and must *continue to bring*, upon the country. Where is Mr. Sheridan with his inquiry into the proceedings in the Carnatic? The printing of the papers, upon that gentleman's motion, has cost us no trifling sum. Why, then, does he not come on with the inquiry? Was it a threat; a mere object of terror to the ministry of that time? All may yet come right upon this head; but *why*, do they tell us, in the mean while, why, Mr. Sheridan is as silent as a barber's block? Let it not be supposed, that this is said by way of goading him on. Very little do I care whether he stir, or not, unless he do it with good will and from principle. I wish, indeed, and I hope, that this may be the case; but, there wants not now any other support to the cause than that which it already has. Mr. Paull has made good the expectations that were entertained of him, by those who had the honour to know him well. There wanted, as was before observed, only *one* man of integrity and industry, such a man being quite competent to the effecting of one of two objects; the obtaining of an inquiry, or the enabling of the people to form a true judgment as to those by whom such inquiry should be defeated. Mr. George Johnstone, as the reader will recollect, did, lately, when there were symptoms of a general desertion of Mr. Paull and his cause, make a declaration; he boasted, that he had, from the first, advised Mr. Paull not to meddle with the subject; and, he also declared off from any intention or wish to cause any inquiry into the conduct of Lord Wellesley. As a refresher of the memory, I will just quote a short passage from the Parliamentary Debates of the 8th of April last, just a year ago "Mr. JOHNSTONE begged leave to "ask Mr. Sheridan whether he had abandoned his motion relative to the Affairs of "the Carnatic. If the hon. gent. meant to "abandon it, *he would*, (inadequate as he "confessed his abilities to be to a subject of "such vast importance), bring it forward. "——MR. SHERIDAN said, that though "the matter had *long lain dormant*, be certainly did not mean to abandon it; especially as a noble lord (Castlereagh) had "lately hinted, that those affairs had been "so happily settled that all inquiry was unnecessary. He meant, *immediately after* "*the holidays*, to fix *a precise day* for bringing forward his motion on that subject."——The diversions of the holidays put it, I suppose, out of his head. I have quoted the book, word for word: see Vol. IV. page 255. And are we to hear of this no more from Mr. Sheridan? As to Mr. Johnstone, he has abandoned it in form; but, is this what the public expected from Mr. Sheridan? In a subsequent page, there is a letter from "A WHIG," in defence of the conduct of Mr. Fox and his friends, relative to the India Inquiry. I have not room here to answer this Whig. The answer would not, indeed, require much room; for, reasoning so subversive of all hitherto-received principles of political morality was, I am persuaded, never before made use of; but, I reserve what is to be said upon this subject until, in my next number perhaps, I shall attempt a description of the *present state of parties*, when, without the least disguise, I shall make my readers who happen to be at a distance tolerably well acquainted with the causes which have led to the strange and disgusting effects that we now witness.

Something will, in my next, be said upon the subject of our foreign relations; but, it must be confessed, that these must now be regarded as objects of an importance greatly inferior to those which have just engaged our attention. *Here*, here at home it is, that our cure, to be effectual, must begin.

THE ARMY.

SIR;——By inserting my letter of the 10th ult. in your Register, (see p. 412) you have entitled yourself to my thanks, and displayed a degree of candour that I may often wish to emulate, but of which I may never be able to boast. I will now take the liberty of noticing a few of the obstacles that present themselves to oppose the establishment of a large regular army in this country, and of pointing out some of the advantages derived from the establishment of volunteer corps.—In most of the ancient military governments the people were in a state of vassalage, or were induced to bear arms by an attachment to idle triumphs and to plunder; and, in many states, the soldier was respected because he was not maintained, wholly, at the expense of the public, but had lands appropriated to the purpose, or a treasury replenished by the spoliation of a neighbour. Times, so far as it relates to this

country, are changed. The soldier must be maintained at the public expense, and the tattered tenant of the cottage must contribute his mite. This places him in a very humble state, and give him what privileges you will, you cannot remove him to a very exalted situation. No labourer or mechanic earns less, and there is no person of so little consequence in the state. Nor ought it to be otherwise; for to allow him as much as another man can earn to maintain himself and a family, would be to cramp industry, and make a sacrifice of agriculture and commerce to the army. A moment may arrive when his services may appear to be useful to his country, and he may be caressed, but this moment disappears, and he is treated with indifference or sacrificed to an inhospitable climate. In the military field, which this country presents to him, he can find little, save sterility; for to mow down the uncultivated natives of India, by thousands, is a bloody, rather than a glorious harvest; and to keep guard over the sable sons of adversity is a loathsome task. The expedition to Egypt, and the battles of the allies, have afforded him better opportunities of acquiring honour; but the opthalmia of the former, and the disasters attending the latter have made them, with all their trophies, not altogether desirable. And how can these scenes be changed? Into what country, congenial to legitimate honour, can the British soldier be transplanted? Can we raise a regular army equal to the task of plucking the guilty laurels from the brow of Napoleon; or can we maintain it, year after year, in a state of idleness, without detriment to civil society, without being a burden to itself and a nuisance to the public? I think, nay, I am persuaded, we cannot. And if we cannot, to what other means must we have recourse? How must the country be made sufficiently military to defend itself, without submitting to the licentiousness of an inactive army? I say by encouraging the volunteer system; and I say so because it has already saved this country and Ireland from the ravages of a mob, advanced the military spirit of the country, and will yet save it from becoming a prey to its enemy.—The effect produced by the volunteer system, when the pressure and spirit of the times excited to insurrection, is so generally allowed to have been beneficial, that I have not so much occasion to appeal to argument as to memory; but I ought to notice that the spirited conduct of the volunteers kept, not only the rabble, but the effervescence of some of the military in check. This might be proved by several unpleasant scenes that occurred, which were too well known to need repetition, and which it may be as well to bury in oblivion; but I have some right to conclude, from what did then happen, that if such a time should again occur, and we should be entirely dependent on a large regular force, we should have to witness scenes not very congenial to liberty or to order. This view of the subject presents the volunteers, with all their defects, in a very favourable light; and if we place, in opposition to their defects, the licentiousness of large idle armies, we shall perceive that they are not entitled to all the degrading epithets that jealousy and prejudice have bestowed upon them. This, however, is not the only favourable point of view in which they may be placed; for they have most certainly advanced a military spirit, and widely spread the rudiments of the military art; and when these are diffused, nothing is wanting to make them shine, but an opportunity of calling them into action. Without such an opportunity even those who have paraded at St. James's cannot be called soldiers. They may know rather more of the routine of military returns and military etiquette, but these are not essentials; and many volunteer corps can boast of youths as perfect masters of their arms as the drill serjeants of the guards. This was not the case when the volunteers first assembled, and were in many places obliged to ride miles, to learn how to shoulder their muskets. Nor is this diffusion of the rudiments the only advantage gained, in a military point of view, for the country can behold 500,000 men in arms, with much more composure than it could, a few years ago, see a few militia assembled; and, I am persuaded, that the sensation which would be felt if they were called into action, would not be greater than what was experienced when the militia were first raised. This command of the passions, in a country so obnoxious to alarm, is a great point gained, and though you may not allow me to call it an increase of military spirit, I am persuaded it is an increase of that spirit, that will, in the day of danger be found useful; that will cause the matron to look up to her son as the defender of his country, and to display, not the ensign of fear, but of Trafalgar. Thousands have now made the musket their companion, and are expert in military evolutions, that would, a few years ago, have despised it; and the spirit that roused them to arms, now it has been once cherished, must descend to the next generation. It may be increased or it may be diminished; it may be made a blessing, or it may be made a curse to the country; but it

cannot be destroyed. And, here allow me to observe, that governments have more frequently displayed their wisdom, by taking advantage of the spirit of the times, than they have by attempting to create a new one. The volunteers may have created rather more expense to the country than can be well afforded, and some retrenchment might be made, particularly in allowance for permanent duty, but in lieu thereof they ought not to be presented with derision. Every allowance they have received was offered by, not extorted from, government; and if these are to be lessened, government ought to assign their reasons, and make the retrenchments with a good grace; for, let the fact be how it may, there is too much difference between saying "we cannot afford you the money we offered you," and saying "you do not deserve it," to allow one to be substituted for the other. These retrenchments might be made without danger; for whether we have 50,000 volunteers, more than the present establishment, or 50,000 less, is not a serious object, excepting so far as the expense is to be considered. This flexibility in the system is an excellence that does not attach itself to the regulars; for, after all that has been said, our manufactories, even in their present depressed state, cannot supply but a certain number of recruits, and the agricultural parts of the country already experience a deficiency of labourers. These are circumstances that ought to be considered by all who do not wish to see measures enforced that would throw the country into confusion: and I say, enforced, because I am persuaded that nothing short of force will enable this country to keep up a larger regular army than about 60,000 effective men, independent of Ireland, and other establishments abroad. Neither shall we want it, for the volunteers can furnish 40,000 men fit to join the regulars and militia, and the remainder, if under martial law, would be better soldiers in three weeks, than raw recruits could be made in three months. This force would enable government to bring 100,000 men to act in one point, at any time, within a few days, and leave a large reserve of volunteers, every day becoming good soldiers. With such an army what occasion is there for alarm? What occasion for experiments? What occasion for the congregated wisdom of the whole world? A little resolution and a little common sense may yet save us. With respect to a part of the volunteers being fit to join the regulars and militia, I can with much confidence appeal to the returns of inspecting field officers, by no means attached to the system, and I have not intentionally overcharged any of the most favourable representations; therefore, I have a right to presume that the volunteers are not quite useless; that they have deserved well of their country, and that they will, whether supported by government or not, if ever an opportunity presents itself, pluck themselves a solitary leaf, to hide their nakedness and shield them from reproach.—I remain, yours, &c. RICHARD.

Cotswood Hill, April 5, 1806.

MR. WINDHAM'S MILITARY PLAN.

SIR;—I trust you will indulge us in the next Number of the Register with your observations on Mr. Windham's Military Plan. Though I do not suppose it likely that any defect will escape your notice, I hope you will excuse a few remarks from an Old Soldier who has long cast an eye of hope to the time, when Mr. Windham would stand forth to rescue his comrades and himself from the degradation brought on the profession by an erroneous system of sixty years standing. To the outline of Mr. Windham's Plan, as far as relates to the amelioration of the soldier's condition, I have no other objection than that he seems to fall far short of the excellent outline proposed by yourself. But, in the detail, this may be remedied, and, provided I am not forced to subscribe to his *animated* panegyric on the Commander in Chief, I will not cavil on that head. But, Sir, I beg you will ask Mr. Windham, who has such regard for the feelings of officers, and who very properly intends putting it out of the power of Volunteer Officers to command those of the army, whether the *possibility* of their being so commanded, is half so revolting to the feelings of an officer, as that of being obliged to submit to the same command from an officer of Militia. As Mr. Windham supposes cases in the former, pray Mr. Cobbett, suppose one in the latter. Suppose a young man of family and fortune to have entered a regiment of the line, suppose it possible that this youth may be irregular in his behaviour, and may bring on himself the displeasure of his commanding officer, and he quits the corps; suppose him, by the interest of his family, to procure a Lieutenant Colonelcy of a Regiment of Militia, and in that situation to return to the Garrison, whence he was driven the week before! Must not every officer of his former corps, including the commander, if of inferior rank, drop their swords and receive this command? I do not say such a case may have literally occurred, but, many similar, and as revolting to a soldier's feelings. Yet,

the Militia establishment is not only to be supported, but, it seems *now* to be the theme of Mr. W.'s praise. I beg again to remark, Sir, the one is only a *possible* grievance, the other an existing one. I shall now proceed to one or two short observations on the Levy proposed by him, which, I conceive, will, when assisted by that excellent skulking plan of a Volunteer establishment, be productive of discontent, jealousy, and evasion: and, here again, the Militia are to be resorted to, though I confess I doubt the accuracy of the newspaper reports on this head; but, so they state it, that the Militia are to drill this Levy.—If it is intended merely to infuse into the people the principles of mechanical movements, the Militia are, no doubt, as well qualified for this, as any other men. But if it is intended to instil into the minds of the youth, the nobler sentiments of military pride and ambition, I should think Militia men the least fitted of all men for the task. Will they recommend to the adventurous that service they have themselves shunned? Will they not rather decry it, were it for no other reason, but for that of increasing their own numbers dependant now on their exertions? By this advantage they will deprive the army of its best recruits, the inhabitants of the country.—It is needless to me to point out to you, Sir, any more of the glaring defects of this plan which your superior genius will easily discover, nor suffer to escape unnoticed. Little as we have yet seen of this Plan, I am convinced by it of the truth of your assertion, that if we are not to have a complete change of system, we had better leave things as they are. An army on the principle of your plan, with a levy en masse according to the excellent regulations on that head, recommended by you in the fourth volume of the Register, page 120, is all we wanted. No ballot, nor evasion, nor exception, unless to numbers of an effective Yeomanry. The drilling of this Levy would be no hardship on any. It might be done by companies of veterans who have completed their periods of service; but, who might prefer employment in this way to any other profession: not bound to it, but, engaged from year to year; or, it might be done by the present recruiting troops and companies filled up to their establishment, and who, while thus engaged, would have an opportunity of procuring for their corps, a class of men very superior to the present composition of the army. Want of time prevents me offering several other observations, on the Yeomanry, as well as on the Guards, the Royal Waggoners, and some other military abortions. The same excuse must be urged for any inaccuracy in this letter. I remain, Sir, your constant reader, and very humble servant,—MILES.—*8th April*, 1800.

PARTIES.

SIR;——As a great admirer of your Political Journal, and fully believing that its contents have a vast influence on the opinions of the wisest, and best part of the people of England, I am induced to trouble you with my sentiments, on the subject of that part of the conduct of our new ministers, which has called forth such strong, and in my humble opinion, such erroneous animadversions from your pen. With regard to Lord Grenville's auditorship, and Lord Ellenborough's place in the cabinet, (though I have a great respect for their characters) I am quite of your opinion, and notwithstanding the very ingenious speech of Mr. Fox on the latter subject, I am fully satisfied, that it is highly exceptionable. I think there is also some reason for remark on the conduct of Mr. Fox and his friends, relative to India affairs, particularly with regard to the production of the papers requisite to elucidate the motives that produced a conduct so generally condemned, as that of Lord Wellesley; but surely, Mr. Cobbett, you have not considered the conduct of these gentlemen with that profound attention, nor pronounced that decision upon them, as might have been expected from your eminent and discriminating judgment; when you say in your Journal of the 15th of March, "that if they do not "support with all their talents, and with "all their means, the proposition for an in"quiry into the conduct of Lord Wellesley, "there will not be one single man of sense "and of honour in the whole country, who "will, for a moment, hesitate in coming to "an unalterable decision as to their charac"ter and their views." If the late change in his Majesty's councils, so generally approved, and by no one more than yourself, had placed none but Mr. Fox and his friends in the government, I should imagine that under *such circumstances*, the country would have anxiously expected from them, a full and fair inquiry into the affairs of India; and if they failed in their duty, the decision you now call for, would in *that case*, have been *certain*, *wise*, and *just*. But, Sir, when I reflect on the wish of the country, so decidedly expressed, that his Majesty would call to his councils every man of *worth* and *talent*, without regard to *past* political opinion; and that, in consequence of that wish, men of various parties have been selected, to

fill the great offices of state: when this is duly considered, and when we know that some of them, are the particular friends of the late minister, and who on *that account*, are naturally strongly disinclined to inquire into the various transactions, that it would be very desirable to see thoroughly investigated; when, Sir, we see this, can there be a reasonable hope, that such an investigation will take place, as in *other circumstances* would be essential, and might with propriety be *demanded*.—If these sentiments are correct, is not the decision which you call for very unreasonable? If I could persuade myself, that in expressing these sentiments, I was endeavouring to stifle an inquiry that would be beneficial to my country, I should consider this moment the most ill employed of any part of my life: I must however confess, that the proposed inquiries, viewed in the light in which they appear to me, will have a tendency very different indeed from the pure intentions of the honourable mover; and, much indeed, do I fear, that the proceeding in them, will seriously injure the country, by creating a difference of opinion in the leading members of administration; and that too at a time, when their *united* exertions are essentially necessary to the salvation of the country. Should, however, this inquiry still be persisted in, I hope that Mr. Fox and his friends will act such a part, as not to weaken that credit with the public, which their past conduct has so justly entitled them to. I am, generally speaking, an advocate for inquiries into past conduct, from a conviction that they are almost always attended with beneficial effects; but a government formed on the comprehensive basis of the present one, does truly appear a proper exception to the general rule; and most happy should I be, if my sentiments could obtain the sanction of a man, I so much respect as yourself, as that alone would stamp in my mind the justness of them. Let the administration have the confidence of the people; let their conduct be strictly watched by their opposers; and should their measures be inimical to the real interests of their country, let them suffer for their guilty conduct; but, I do sincerely hope and believe, that the measures of men of such tried integrity and ability, must prove highly advantageous to the whole community, if they have the support of the wise and the good. To you, Sir, (who look to reasoning alone) it is unnecessary I know, but it may be satisfactory to some of your readers (should this be honoured with a place in your valuable publication) to be assured that the writer is scarcely known to any one of his Majesty's ministers, and that he has no other views or wishes than the good of his country.—I am, Sir, &c.——A Whig.——*Guilford, April 6, 1805.*

CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

Sir;——I read the short but sensible and excellent letter of Anglo Hibernicus, in the last number of your valuable Register, (see p. 470) with attention and pleasure. The subject has often drawn my attention towards a letter for the public eye, and chiefly with a view of offering some propositions for the improvement of the shamefully oppressed and injured Irish. The promised letter of your correspondent, will restrain me for the present from entering minutely upon the subject. Allow me then, merely to touch upon it. But first give me leave to tell Anglo Hibernicus, that upon following up the principle he has here begun with, he cannot fail to interest all your readers, if they have the welfare of their country at heart. I for one, hope sincerely he will handle the subject at large, and go on as he has begun. It is the common practice to speak of the lower orders in Ireland, as brutes and savages, little deserving encouragement or attention. I shudder at such a sentiment, I feel a horror of the person who can so lightly talk of his fellow creatures, and the more so, when I consider, that it is he who contributes to that state of wretchedness and woe.—To me it appears a disgrace to England, that they should so pride themselves on their superiority over their fellow subjects. Wherever an opportunity has offered they have shown themselves equally efficient with the inhabitants of their sister isle; and, I ask them, Mr. Cobbett, would it not be more to their credit, that instead of the constant volley of abuse uttered against the Irish, they endeavoured by every means in their power, to alleviate their sufferings, not by a Catholic emancipation, for I consider that measure as a mere job to serve a few individuals, and with which the lower class have little to do; but of that at another opportunity.—I merely mean to hint at a few examples set by the Irish nobility, and men of landed property, by a more constant residence on their estates, examining into the condition of their tenants, letting their farms not to that detestable class called *middle men*, but to those who really work and would by their industry thrive, by cherishing them in their distresses, and associating more with them, so that these poor creatures may partake in a manner of their customs. If a tenant sees that his landlord does not take all that he earns, and pays to another country, but spends

some of it amongst them, or even in his native country, would it not be a stimulus, they at present have not, to be more industrious? Is it not so in England? Was not the case thus in France under the old system? And whatever people talk of the despotism and ambition of Buonaparté, (which I admit) the change for the better of the lower class I have witnessed. There is another hint I intend offering, with respect to the conduct of the government. Under the late ministry I certainly expected nothing, nor am I one of those who expect every thing from the present. I cannot say I have that implicit confidence in them, not only from the characters of those who compose it, but from many of their acts, as well as inaction in certain branches of the political and civil dispositions. But, Sir, I could wish to see some act of the Irish government to ameliorate the condition of its people, and this, Sir, I think might be accomplished, by a revision of the laws, both statute and common, and especially with respect to juries; their mode of elections, and if there were certain establishments for the instruction of the rising generation, it would be of considerable utility; an increase in the price of labour, a little relaxation from the present hours of work, (of course the wages will be in proportion) and a small piece of land rented with rights of common, together with the example of the landlords which I have before mentioned, and the destruction of the middle man. I cannot believe, but that the condition of this unfortunate people would be materially changed. We should hear of no more rebellions, nor nightly meetings, they would have what all men require, and have an undoubted right to do so. A motive which is the only defence a country has from invasion.——My opinion of the present administration is not formed upon their refusal to comply with the claims of the Catholics. I never was of opinion, that the repeal of those laws merely would do any service to the body of the Irish people; nor can I be convinced by all the declamations (I have seen but few arguments) published, nor by the persuasive eloquence of Mr. Fox, to alter my opinion. The subject would be too long for this letter; but I thought it proper to say as much, lest such a conclusion might be drawn.—— Have we seen any material change in our *diplomatique corps?* It is loudly called for, we are ridiculed throughout Europe; not a moment should have been lost in such a change. Do we see any great disposition in the ministry to *resign the places they cannot compatibly hold,* when they call on us to pay more taxes? Is there any disposition to inquire into the affairs of India? That millstone about the neck of England. Yet they call on us to pay a million to the support of the Company. Are there not some offices improperly bestowed? Were there no better characters in the country worthy of them? How can these men reconcile the mode in which they have laid a tax on income? They who were so loud against Mr. Pitt for destroying the middling classes, have done the very same thing, and foolishly too; for how in God's name are they to get at incomes of £50 a year, arising from day labouring people, and few earn less? Again, would it not have been more popular to have eased those incomes of 2 or 3 or even 400 a year entirely and increased the tax proportionately on those of 10,000 and upwards, so as to make up the deficiency? It has occurred to me as I was writing, and, I therefore, mention it in a hasty manner, without much consideration. There are many subjects I have not touched on, for I do not expect them to do every thing at once. I wish to see a beginning, and then my confidence will begin. I have troubled you Sir, too long, and beg to subscribe myself, AN ENGLISHMAN.

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPER.

Message from the Emperor Napoleon to the French Senate, dated March 4, 1806.

Senators, Wishing to give a proof of the affection which we bear to the Princess Stephanie, niece of our dearly beloved Spouse, we have affianced her with Prince Charles, hereditary Prince of Baden, and have judged it expedient, under these circumstances, to adopt the said Princess Stephanie Napoleon as our daughter. This union appears to us to be likewise conformable to our policy, and the welfare of our people. Our departments of the Rhine will contemplate with pleasure an alliance which will be to them a new motive for cultivating the relations of commerce and good neighbourhood with the subjects of the Elector. The distinguished qualities of Prince Charles of Baden are to us a sure guarantee for the happiness of our daughter. Accustomed to see you partake in every thing that interests us, we thought we ought not to delay informing you of an alliance which is to us very agreeable. NAPOLEON.

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